

# POST Meeting Minutes

## September 1, 2021

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The POST Committee was called to order at 4:04 pm by Chair Jason Groves. Members present included Jason Groves, Paul Hilts, and Julie Kolar. Amiee joined the meeting after it began. The meeting was held in-person and electronically via Zoom Conferencing.

Staff present included Susan Philp, Planning Director; Watkins Fulk-Gray, Staff Planner; Catherine Christoff, Town Engineer; Chris Beiser, Town Arborist; and James Lindt, Assistant Planning Director.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

M/S Paul and Julie to approve the minutes from August 11, 2021. Motion passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

#### **Update on Basalt River Park**

Catherine updated the group on current construction work at Basalt River Park. They will start forming and pouring concrete next week. They are on schedule. Susan noted other projects happening in the same area and other places in Town.

Susan told the POST Committee that Watkins is leaving to take another job.

#### **Discussion on 2022 POST Projects**

Christy Hamrick has updated the expected revenue for POST based on sales tax figures. Although those numbers are not finalized there is more POST revenue than prior years. Susan explained that the POST budget is not exclusively the POST Committee's budget. The Town Manager and Finance Director have a significant say in the budget. Susan reminded POST that a couple of years ago Administration wanted to pay off the line of credit used for the underpass. That decision did not come from the POST Committee. Up to 80% of funds can be used on capital items. Other funds go toward maintenance.

The biggest project for 2022 is the Basalt River Park. At the end of this year everything at the Park will be bedded down, and landscaping at Basalt River Park will begin as soon as possible next year.

*Amiee joined the meeting.*

Phase 2 at the Basalt River Park includes landscaping, the bandshell, the restroom, and the bus stop (which is included in the proposed budget). Susan

discussed cost estimates for 2022 projects. A couple hundred thousand will go toward Arbaney Park next year. Susan noted that POST is doing a site visit next week at Arbaney. She said that they have been getting neighborhood complaints about noise from the heat pumps. She thinks that this may be because they have not yet been properly calibrated. James explained that they are trying to incorporate some sound buffering materials, which they will test with a decibel meter later this week. They may also consider hedges in between the heat pumps and the neighborhood or some other sort of barrier. Jason said the heat pumps have been off for the last couple of days. He said the fan noise is notable even though they have a privacy fence and some vegetation. He said other neighbors have complained about it.

Susan said she had met with RFOV to discuss future projects, which have been discussed with POST at past meetings. She described the Lot J development that is under review for an area near Ponderosa Park. RFOV will try to continue the trail improvements in this area. The developers plan to meet with POST toward the end of September to review these commitments.

Susan said that the Mid-Valley Trails Committee's budget is only \$110k for next year, but they have put some funds toward the following trails: the connector trail by Valley Pines (\$3,000), \$5,000 toward Stage Road trail, smaller money for bus stop connectors, and Lake Christine trails. Some of POST's funds go toward Ponderosa Park. Pitkin County is optimistic about being able to start work on the whitewater park.

POST funds have been set aside for pedestrian amenities. Money has been set aside for Willits area parks, with the hopes of creating a restroom and improvements to the pavilion.

Chris Beiser discussed improvements to the wetland area in Linear Park. He asked what the whitewater park improvements will be. Susan referred him to Pitkin County's website. She said the plan calls for a viewing area. Julie asked if it is the same Bluegreen plan that they have seen before. James said he believes so. He added that they hope to do a trail connection between the rock structure toward Fisherman's Park. Susan noted that Fisherman's Park is in Pitkin County, but the Town maintains it.

Julie said a trail connecting the whitewater park with Elk Run and other nearby places, including a bridge, would be the ideal scenario.

## **POST Comments and Questions**

Susan discussed the recent emails between Trevor and the POST Committee. She said she had shared their comments with Ryan Mahoney. Boyd Bierbaum advises that the cemetery is not a POST project, but rather a Public Works affair. She noted that the Town contracts out a lot of the park maintenance. She asked if there are specific areas that the POST Committee thinks we need to do better

maintenance on. She differentiated parks and landscaped areas of streets, which may come from different funds.

Julie wondered if Trevor thinks there is not enough money in general for maintenance. Susan said that she and Ryan think they should have an internal discussion about this, though some has already been earmarked for irrigation projects.

Paul characterized the note from Trevor as a cry for help for money and resources to help them do a good job, which he said is a good sign that Staff care. He said that they do not have a plan for maintenance for the additional projects they have taken on, and would like to hear a breakdown of who is responsible for what and what they need in order to do a good job. He thinks it is imperative to have a good and preventive maintenance plan in the future. Paul said he would like to have a comprehensive list of what Trevor and the Town are responsible for. He indicated he would like to have more input on maintenance, even including hiring a consultant if necessary. Susan said it would be beneficial to hear from the Town's administration on this topic.

Amiee said a benefit of having a consultant with a cap on price would be they can bring an objective and independent perspective. This person could lay out cost estimates. Amiee said she might be in favor of a moratorium on the Town taking on new parks in order to create a plan for maintenance. Paul agreed.

Jason said he is in general agreement with everyone else but is not sure about a moratorium on new parks in case new opportunities arise. He mentioned Lot J as a potential opportunity. He agrees that there are places that need some love and attention. Julie said maintenance responsibilities should be outlined in the original construction plans of projects.

Paul agreed and made an analogy of purchasing and maintaining a car.

Susan said she would put a caveat in their spreadsheet that they want to look at true costs of maintenance. She noted that POST members need to give Susan a list of areas where there are missing connections.

Paul asked about the status of doing corridor plans for Willits Lane and other places. Susan said they are getting requests to make ADA crossings of Willits Lane, which is the most urgent need of a place to do a corridor plan.

Susan said that Pitkin County has not paved the part of the Emma Trail in front of the Emma Store because they are waiting on the planning process for the Emma Store to finalize.

## **Updates on Projects**

Chris said he is working on clearing some brush and figure out a long term plan for the cottonwoods at a location near Willits Lane. At Sunset Park there is a need for a maintenance plan. He has been going once every two months to keep growth and invasive species at bay. He asked if they want a vegetation screen or for it to be well trimmed. Susan said she likes the clearing that he has done because it makes people more aware of the park. Chris noted that the crosswalk has been repainted. Aimee said she likes the crosswalk and having a vegetation screen. She said a lot of kids and other people use it.

Susan said they are meeting with RFOV tomorrow to move some smaller projects forward.

Jason said that while he does not believe the Town is failing at maintenance, he wondered if Trevor's note indicated a lack of personnel for maintenance. He suggested having a public volunteer day or a partnership with RFOV, all of which could be a community building idea. Susan said that Chris had volunteered to do some arborist training to RFOV.

Susan said they may have Catherine take Watkins' place as staff support but said that Catherine cannot meet at their current meeting schedule because of her kids. She suggested some options for moving the POST meetings. She asked if there is any room for POST members to move the meeting schedule. Julie indicated that she could not. Jason and Amiee said mornings would be tough for them.

In response to a question from Paul, Susan noted that the columns on the left show expenditures for 2019 and 2020.

## **Adjournment**

M/S Julie and Paul to adjourn at 5:05 pm. Motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.